

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

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INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

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FM AMEMBASSY SANAA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3714

INFO AMEMASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

CINCEUR

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANAA 968

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: YE, SA

SUBJ: PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF YEMENI PRIMIN VISIT
TO SAUDI ARABIA

JERUSALEM FOR SECRETARY'S PARTY

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

1. ON BASIS OF TELEPHONED REPORTS AT CONSLUSION
OF PRIMIN HASSAN MAKKI'S OFFICIAL VISIT TO
SAUDI ARABIA, YARG IS PLEASED THAT ITS PRIMARY OB-
JECTIVES WERE REALIZED. PRIMIN MAKKI WAS EXTENSIVELY
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EXPOSED TO SAG LEADERSHIP. YARG FEELS THAT

WHILE SAG'S SUSPICIONS OF HIM MAY NOT HAVE BEEN ELIMINATED THEY HAVE BEEN LESSENED AND A BASIS LAID FOR GREATER CONFIDENCE IN FUTURE. INDIVIDUAL MINISTERS HAD USEFUL MEETINGS WITH SAG COUNTERPARTS. RELATIONSHIPS THUS ESTABLISHED ALSO CONSIDERED BENEFICIAL FOR EXPANDED FUTURE COOPERATION.

2. IN MORE SPECIFIC TERMS, PRIMIN AND PARTY OBTAINED SAG AGREEMENT CONTINUE SR 100 MILLION ANNUAL BUDGET SUBSIDY FOR YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1974. SAG WILL FINANCE SR 40 MILLION CONTRACT BETWEEN YARG AND FRENCH TELECOMMUNICATIONS FIRM (THOMPSON) FOR MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS. ALSO EXPANSION OF TAIZ AIRPORT. SEVERAL LESSER PROJECTS CONCLUDED.

3. FOR SECURITY REASONS YEMENI PARTY REPORTED ONLY ELLIPTICALLY ON CONVERSATIONS WITH SAG REGARDING MILITARY ASSISTANCE, ON WHICH SAG COMMITMENT TO REARM NORTH YEMEN FROM WESTERN SOURCES WAS A KEY NEGOTIATING OBJECTIVE. BETWEEN LINES OF TELEPHONED REPORT BY CHIEF OF STAFF MASWARI, YARG UNDERSTANDS MOD SULTAN WAS RELUCTANT MAKE PROMISES. HE EVIDENTLY REFERRED TO SAG'S HEAVY RESPONSIBILITIES IN CONNECTION RE-ORIENTING EGYPTIAN MILITARY INVENTORY TO WESTERN SUPPLY. IMPLICATION TAKEN BY ONE OFFICIAL WITH WHOM WE SPOKE IS THAT SAG WILL FINANCE CONTINUED DELIVERIES OF SOVIET BLOC EQUIPMENT TO YEMEN BY EGYPT AS RECEIPTS OF WESTERN MATERIEL MAKE RELEASE POSSIBLE.

4. DETAILS OF SAG-YARG UNDERSTANDINGS RESULTING FROM MAKKI VISIT WILL BE MORE READILY AVAILABLE TO EMBASSY JIDDA, AND HERE FOLLOWING RETURN OF PRIMIN'S PARTY AFTER VISITS TO GULF STATES.

5. COMMENT: CONCLUSION OF MAJOR MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS CONTRACT WITH FRENCH FIRM IS A SEVERE BLOW TO UK WHICH HAD LOBBIED HARD FOR BRITISH FIRM RACAL. IT IS ALSO, WE FEEL, NOT GOOD FOR LONG TERM EFFECTIVENESS OF YAR MILITARY SINCE IT WILL NECESSITATE INTRODUCTION OF FRENCH, A LANGUAGE ALMOST COMPLETELY NEW TO YEMEN, CONFIDENTIAL

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RUSSIAN AND ENGLISH BEING THE FOREIGN LANGUAGES TO WHICH ARMED FORCES MARGINALLY EXPOSED. RELIABLE EVIDENCE IS THAT THOMPSON CONTRACT WAS PUSHED BY INFLUENTIAL SAG AND YARG OFFICIALS, WHOSE PALMS HAD BEEN GENEROUSLY CROSSED BY THOMPSON, ACTING IN COLLUSION. CRAWFORD

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